Budgetary assistance for States from foreign countries

1670. DR. MAHESH CHANDRA SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have permitted any State Government to receive "budgetary assistance" from foreign countries;

(b) if so, the States which have been given permission and the countries from which these funds are coming; and

(c) whether there are any pre-conditions to such budgetary assistance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) Under the provisions of the Constitution, the executive powers of a State extend to borrowing only within the territory of India. Also, under the Vllth Schedule of the Constitution, 'Foreign Loans' come under the Union list. Therefore, State Governments cannot receive financial assistance from foreign countrieslnstitutions directly. However, Central Government approaches foreign countries for financial assistance to the States. Out of the bilateral donors, one agreement worth UK Pound 65.00 Million has been signed with DFID(UK) on 6.3.2002 for budgetary support to Government of Andhra Pradesh for the Andhra Pradesh Economic and Public Reform Programme.

Loans to weaker sections of society

†1671. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to issue guidelines for providing loan from banks to weaker sections of society;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any action, so far, in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons thereto?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have issued instructions to banks from time to time so as to ensure that more underprivileged sections are given proper attention in the matter of allocation of credit in the priority sector and that the advances to weaker sections reach a level of 25 per cent of prionty sector advances or 10 per cent of Net Bank Credit.

CBI's Dossiers on Customs Personnel

1672. SHRI PREM CHANI) GUPTA: Will '.he Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the CBI has prepared dossiers on a large number of customs and excise men containing details of favours granted by them; and

(b) if so, the action taken by Government on these cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) The CBI has not prepared any such dossiers.

(b) In view of reply to (a) above, does not arise.

Excise duty on chewing Tobacco and Gutka

1673. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that annual excise duty on chewing tobacco and gutka has been reduced drastically during the last one year;

(b) if so, the revenue collected from chewing tobacco and gutka product manufacturers during the last two years, year-wise; and

(c) the top five manufacturers of chewing tobacco and gutka who have paid highest excise duly during the last two years, year-wise?